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ABSTRACT

During Fiscal Year 1979-1980, the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) and its network of state counterparts, State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees (SOICCs), made progress in carrying out their legislative mandates to develop and implement an occupational information system, to improve interagency communication and coordination, and to give special attention to the labor market information needs of youth. First, NOICC prepared a framework document that established the minimum parameters of the Occupational Information System (OIS) and defined the basic informational requirements and standards that the OIS must satisfy. In addition, a grant was awarded to train SOICC personnel, and many other start-up projects were designed and implemented. In order to increase interagency communication and coordination, NOICC participated in joint workshops and training sessions with the Veterans Administration, the Federal Trade Commission, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Department of Defense, and the Employment and Training Administration. NOICC also spent more than $3 million to support the labor market information needs of youth. Much of the money was spent to continue to develop the career information delivery systems in each state and to tie them to the national system. Grants were provided for various states to carry out projects in this area. Future directions for NOICC and its state units were planned to continue the work started during this fiscal year. (KC)

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September 30, 1980

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NOICC Administrative Report No. 5
April 1981

FOREWORD

This document is the second annual Status Report on the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) and the State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (SOICC) Network. The first annual report provided the reader with the background of history and legislation necessary for understanding the mission and function of NOICC and the SOICCs. After providing general background information, the 1980 Status Report focuses on NOICC/SOICC accomplishments during the period May 1, 1979, and May 1, 1980, with respect to the three mandated areas:

- OIS Development and Implementation
- Improvement of Communication and Coordination
- Attention to the Labor Market Information Needs of Youth

The NOICC/SOICC Network provides a formal mechanism for coordinating the activities of several agencies with respect to occupational information. The NOICC/SOICC Network presents a new approach in solving problems, an approach that is based on interagency, cooperative effort. The NOICC/SOICC accomplishments that are delineated in this document are, therefore, the result of direction provided by the NOICC/SOICC statutory members and/or their representatives and the support and cooperation of personnel in the organizations they represent, together with NOICC/SOICC staff.

Information on NOICC expenditures by priority area that appear in this report may differ somewhat from those previously published by NOICC because financial data presented in this report are current as of September 30, 1980. Except where otherwise specified, financial data, especially that data representing the Basic Assistance Grant Program, show the amount of funds obligated by NOICC for SOICC use in a given fiscal year. Because of the ongoing nature of NOICC grant programs, NOICC forward funds its grantees when possible. In calculating that amount of basic assistance support actually provided to the SOICCs is a given fiscal year, grant amounts were summed by the fiscal year, for which the funds were to support SOICC activities rather than by the fiscal year in which the obligations were incurred. If, for example, NOICC incurred a $100,000 Basic Assistance Grant in September, 1979, that amount would be included in the financial support figure for FY 1980. The reason is that the $100,000 represents forward funding and more properly belongs in FY 1980. NOICC believes that this method of presenting financial detail give a more accurate representation of the amount of funds available for SOICC use a given period.

A C K N O W L E G E M E N T

NOICC wishes to acknowledge and thank Sue Bartlett, Director of the Montana Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, for her skillful and diligent assistance in preparing the initial draft of this report. Working at NOICC offices, Ms. Bartlett identified material to be included, organized the format, and prepared the initial draft. NOICC would also like to thank the members of the Montana committee for their generosity in making Ms. Bartlett's services available.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE NOICC/SOICC NETWORK

Creation and Structure of NOICC

Over the last fifteen years, there has been a growing awareness of the need for a single, standardized system to collect, analyze, and disseminate occupational information. In response to this need, Congress included in the Education Amendments of 1976 (Public Law 94-482) the creation of the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) and directed the National Committee to develop and implement an occupational information system at the Federal, State and local levels. This mandate was reaffirmed and expanded in three succeeding pieces of legislation, the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-93), the Career Education Incentive Act (P.L. 95-207), and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Amendments of 1978 (P.L. 95-524) 95-524)

The following officials were named in the Education Amendments as members of this National Committee:

- Commissioner of Education (USOE)[1/]
- Administrator of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)[1/]
- Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training (ETA)
- Commissioner of Labor Statistics (BLS)

Through these officials, the agencies they represent entered into an Interagency Agreement in March 1977 (revised in January 1978) that established NOICC as an operating entity. The Agreement created a Technical Steering Group (TSG) comprised of a representative appointed by each statutory NOICC member. The Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration was also invited to designate a person to work with this Group. The TSG has been delegated the authority to establish policy guidelines for NOICC, to determine the amount of funds necessary for NOICC's activities, to approve NOICC's annual expenditure plan, and to work with NOICC staff to achieve NOICC's legislative mandates.

1/ During the period covered by this report, the Office of Education and the National Center for Education Statistics were part of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. These functions have been transferred to the newly authorized Department of Education, making the NOICC a joint activity of the Department of Education and the Department of Labor.

The current NOICC staff consists of eleven positions--seven professional and four support. Program responsibilities have been divided between two operating units. One unit is responsible for management of career information delivery efforts for the administrative relationships and communications necessary to the NOICC/SOICC network and for the technical assistance and training relative to all program areas. The other unit is responsible for the design, development and implementation of a comprehensive occupational information system. Both units report to NOICC's Executive Director, who is responsible for policy formulation and overall management of NOICC programs.

NOICC has also contracted to secure assistance in the following areas: Analysis and cross-coding of occupational and educational classification systems, development and implementation of a NOICC management plan and analysis of NOICC program operations and grants management. Through an Intergovernmental Personnel Agreement with the Fairfax County, Virginia Public Schools, NOICC has also obtained the assistance of a career information delivery systems program specialist. (Additional information on NOICC's structure and operating arrangements is provided in Appendix A.)

Legislative Mandates

Both the Education Amendments of 1976 and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) Amendments of 1978 gave specific program mandates to NOICC. These mandates are:

1. To improve coordination between, and communication among, vocational education and CETA administrators and program planners, research personnel, employment security agency administrators and employment and training planning and administering agencies at the Federal, State and local levels in the use of program data and employment data.

2. To develop and implement an occupational information system (OIS). The OIS is to:

    a. Meet the common occupational information needs of vocational and employment training program planners and administrators at the Federal, State and local levels;

    b. Include information on occupational supply and occupational demand;

    c. Be based on uniform definitions, standardized estimating procedures and standardized occupational classifications.

3. To give special attention to the labor market information needs of youth.

4. To assist the State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees.

To support the activities of NOICC, the Education Amendments of 1976 directed the Commissioner of Education to transfer not less the $3 million nor more than $5 million to NOICC. Similarly, the CETA Amendments directed the Secretary of Labor to transfer to NOICC not less than $3 million nor more than $5 million from CETA Title III funds.

In addition to its legislative mandates, the role of NOICC was further expanded by the Career Education Incentive Act of 1977. This Act directs the Commissioner of Education to consult with NOICC in examining "the occupational information needs of individuals and organizations eligible for participation in programs assisted by this Act" and to "furnish information to interested parties on Federal programs which gather, analyze, and disseminate occupational and career information" as well as on exemplary career education programs. To support this information program, the Act permits the Commissioner of Education to reserve for this purpose a specified percentage of the funds appropriated to carry out this Act.

The NOICC/SOICC Network

The need to establish State-level counterparts to NOICC was also recognized by Congress. Accordingly, the Education Amendments of 1976 required each State receiving Federal vocational education and CETA funds to establish a State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (SOICC). With the financial and technical assistance of NOICC, the State Committees are to implement an occupational information system in the States.

The Education Amendments further specified that the members of each SOICC are to be representatives of:

- The State Board administering vocational education
- The State Employment Security Agency
- The State Manpower Services Council (now called the State Employment and Training Council)
- The State agency administering the vocational rehabilitation program

In response to NOICC's leadership and as a result of NOICC-State cooperation, SOICCs have been formed and program activities have begun in all fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands and the Pacific Trust Territory. Information on the administrative procedures used to establish the SOICCs and on their organizational structures is provided in Appendix B.

NOICC Program Policies

Although the need for a single standardized system for the collection, analysis and dissemination of occupational information has been widely recognized for some time, no detailed description of the structure or content of such a system had been developed prior to the establishment of NOICC. Consequently, NOICC has taken a leadership role in developing the concept of an OIS in its full scope and detail. The OIS is designed so the information base is standard among all States and no new data collection efforts are necessary; the OIS will be implemented through the SOICCs.

NOICC's initial demonstration of leadership in developing an OIS was the adoption of several basic policies originally published in the Federal Register, July 19, 1978, and later revised in the Federal Register, December 12, 1979. The policies are:

- "NOICC will not be a primary data collection agency but shall coordinate such efforts principally among its member agencies.

- "NOICC adopts the standard occupational classification system of the Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards, U.S. Department of Commerce, as a standard overall classification system.

- "NOICC adopts the occupational employment statistics program of the Department of Labor as the standard principal source of current and projected occupational employment data at the local, State and national level

- "NOICC, in development of the occupational supply model of the OIS, will utilize the data and information available from the following sources:

  - Employment and Training Administration's data reporting systems, e.g., State and National Apprenticeship System (SNAPS) and Employment Security Automated Reporting System (ESARS).

  - State Employment Security Agency programs, i.e., Employment Service (ES) and Unemployment Insurance Service (UIS).

  - Rehabilitation Services Administration's Case Service Report System (CSRS).

- "NOICC encourages the implementation of Statewide career information systems for the delivery of occupational and educational information used for career choice and job search purposes. The information used in these systems should be obtained from the OIS to the maximum possible extent. NOICC's concept for the development of these systems is based on the career information system demonstration program of the Department of Labor.

- "NOICC adopts the labor market area concept, as defined by the Department of Labor, as the basic geographic subdivision for the development and use of occupational information."

The policies serve as the foundation upon which the OIS development and implementation activities of the NOICC and the SOICCs are built. The policies also make clear that NOICC does not function as a data collecting agency since such functions are appropriately performed by other agencies. Instead, the kinds of functions NOICC performs to achieve its legislative mandates include:

- Serving as a coordinating entity for the NOICC/SOICC Network and for the Federal agencies having responsiblity for OIS-related data programs or activities. NOICC's coordinative activities involve encouraging the adoption of OIS standards, requesting and supporting system modifications when necessary and acting to prevent duplication. The SOICCs perform a similar function at the State level.

- Allocating funds to support the activities and efforts of the SOICCs; additional funds are provided to other appropriate agencies or organizations for OIS-related projects that are national in scope. NOICC's grants management function includes monitoring the progress and results of the activities and projects it funds.

- Providing technical assistance to the SOICCs and to other agencies or organizations engaged in OIS-related activities. Part of this function is fulfilled by developing materials and sponsoring training sessions on OIS design/development/implementation and in the use of occupational information.

Allocation of NOICC Funds

As of fiscal year (FY) 1980, NOICC has established three major grant programs to fund SOICC activities: SOICC Basic Assistance grants, Special Purpose Project grants, and Career Information Delivery System grants.

SOICC Basic Assistance grants provide funds yearly to each SOICC for two staff positions, basic operating expenses and program activities directed primarily toward OIS development, implementation and training. Basic Assistance Grants to the SOICCs totaled $4.8 million in FY 1979, and $5.2 million in FY 1980, an 8 percent increase. Many SOICCs have secured additional funding to support their activities for non-NOICC sources such as the vocational education, CETA, and employment security agency programs within their States. These additional funds provide tangible evidence of the cooperative relationships fostered by the SOICCs at the State level.

In FY 1979, NOICC initiated a competitive program of Special Purpose Project grants to support developmental work on several aspects and elements of the OIS. Eleven such grants totaling $626,000 were awarded to SOICCs in FY 1979. In FY 1980, NOICC obligated about $2.5 million for special projects, of which $587,000 went to SOICCs in the form of Special Purpose Project grants. These include grants to some SOICCs to conduct one-time projects of national applicability and significance. Of these, the largest is a competitive grant of $275,000 awarded in FY 1980 to a consortium of three SOICCs -- North Carolina, South Carolina and Colorado -- for OIS development and implementation assistance.

In FY 1980, NOICC initiated a second competitive grant program, the Career Information Delivery System (CIDS) grants. Through this program, fifteen SOICCs were awarded two-year grants for the implementation of Statewide career information delivery systems. Over the two-year period, NOICC will expend about $4.5 million in support of this program. During FY 1980 NOICC spent an additional $1.1 million to support activities related to the labor market information needs of youth including technical assistance for the CIDS grantees. The CIDS has been designated by NOICC as the standard OIS concept for encouraging the development and use of occupational information for career choice and job search purposes.

Taking into acount both the recurring grant programs and the one-time projects of a national nature, NOICC's financial assistance to the SOICCs rose from a total of $5.4 million in 1979 to $7.7 million in FY 1980.

NOICC has also sponsored specific projects, national in scope, through transfers of funds to its signatory agencies or other Federal offices. Interagency transfers totaled $326,000 in FY 1979 and $1.4 million in FY 1980. On a limited basis, NOICC has contracted with individuals or private firms for particular kinds of management and technical assistance and for small projects, primarily in the areas of report preparation and conference or workshop arrangements. The management and administrative functions of NOICC required $259,000 in FY 1979 and $457,000 in FY 1980.

NOICC/SOICC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The legislative mandates of NOICC and the SOICCs are to develop and implement an occupational information system, to improve interagency communication and coordination, and to give special attention to the labor market information needs of youth. Accomplishments in each of these areas during FY 1979 and FY 1980 are presented below. (Accomplishments previous to this period are described in the May 1, 1979, report, The Status of the NOICC/SOICC Network.)

OIS Development and Implementation: NOICC Activities

NOICC expended $871,000 on OIS development and implementation activities in FY 1979 (excluding the SOICC Basic Assistance grants that are reviewed later in this report). Expenditures in this area for FY 1980 totaled $932,000 (also exclusive of SOICC Basic Assistance grants).

As noted earlier, NOICC initially demonstrated its leadership in the development of the OIS concept by adopting specific OIS policies. During FY 1979, NOICC continued this leadership by sponsoring the preparation and publication of A Framework for Developing an Occupational Information System. Reviewed and approved by NOICC's signatory agencies, this document establishes the minimum parameters of the OIS and defines the basic informational requirements and standards that the OIS must satisfy.

As discussed in the Framework, the OIS being developed by NOICC and each SOICC will provide the occupational information necessary to the planning processes for vocational education and employment training programs and essential to the career planning, guidance and job search activities of individuals throughout the Nation. Since the basic purpose of the OIS is to provide to users the occupationally related information necessary for decisionmaking, the OIS will be user oriented. Data categories specified in the Framework as OIS components include:

- Occupational demand (job opportunities),
- Occupational supply (number of people working or seeking work),
- Occupational characteristics (duties, requirements, working conditions, wages, and similar information for specific occupations), and
- Complementary information (education and training programs available, location of these programs, financial assistance offered, population demographics and trends, and similar information).

One analytical procedure was also identified as an essential OIS component: supply/demand interface. This procedure includes comparing supply data to demand data and analyzing the results of this comparison; it also involves identifying, explaining and relating the occupational and educational coding structures used in the procedure.

A Framework for Developing an Occupational Information System constituted NOICC's initial effort to provide guidance to the SOICC's on the full scope and structure of the OIS. As this document was in its final review, NOICC announced a competitive grant for assistance in occupational information system development and implementation. The grant was awarded in September, 1979, to a consortium of the North Carolina, South Carolina, and Colorado SOICCs and will provide for conceptual development, technical assistance, and training of SOICC personnel. The project includes the following four phases:

Phase I: A National Overview of the Need for Occupational Information. This phase will provide a detailed conceptual underpinning of OIS through identifying, reviewing, and summarizing the perspectives of a number of observers on the need for occupational information. User needs assessments conducted by SOICCs are being summarized, interviews are being conducted with representatives of Federal user agencies and national user groups, concept papers on the need for occupational information are being written by leading experts in five program areas, and a review of the literature is being prepared.

Phase II: Occupational Information System Handbook. An OIS Handbook is being developed containing detailed technical descriptions of each OIS information element and data source, the procedures for using each data element in the development of OIS, and alternatives for interpreting and presenting occupational supply and demand information. Drafts of various sections were reviewed by the Federal agencies and selected SOICCs and the entire Handbook will be presented to NOICC's statutory agencies for review, as well as to the SOICCs represented on NOICC's SOICC Resource Group. The final Handbook is to be distributed during the Phase IV of the project.

Phase III: Training Materials on the OIS Handbook. The grant will provide a training package introducing the OIS concept and content. The training package is being designed for use by all persons involved in OIS development in SOICC agencies and in training the SOICC Directors and their staffs. Special materials will be developed for use by SOICC and NOICC staff in training others on OIS.

Phase IV: Training Conference on OIS Development. The final phase will be a conference for SOICC Directors and their staffs and representatives from each of the NOICC/SOICC statutory agencies introducing the OIS Handbook and the training package developed in Phases II and III. Two conferences are scheduled for January 1981, one for States in the eastern half of the country in Raleigh, North Carolina, and one for western States in San Antonio, Texas.

With projects underway to provide detailed descriptions and guidance on the full scope of the OIS, NOICC began preparation of a long-range OIS plan. The long-range plan sets forth a blueprint for NOICC's OIS activities through FY 1983. It also indicates priorities, target completion dates, and resources required for the design and implementation of a comprehensive national and State OIS. The plan is to be revised as needed.

NOICC has sponsored a number of activities directed toward development and implementation of individual OIS components. In significant part, these NOICC activities have focused on efforts to revise and to relate the occupational and educational classification systems essential to the OIS supply/ demand interface.

Several major systems for classifying and coding occupational and educational information presently exist. Information essential to the OIS is collected by different agencies for different purposes using different classification systems. Consequently, data collected by one agency is seldom directly comparable with data collected by another agency.

Since NOICC's mission is not to create additional data gathering activities, existing systems must be integrated into and become part of the OIS through the development of standard definitions, standardized estimating procedures, and a standard occupational classification system. A crucial aspect of such integration is the cross-coding of the multiple data systems used in the education and employment areas. NOICC, therefore, funded a project through the California SOICC to develop a code "crosswalk" based on relationships among the various classification systems developed by Federal agencies. This project resulted in the 1979 interim edition of Vocational Preparations and Occupations, Volume 1, and a computer tape containing the classification system "crosswalk" developed by the project.

Vocational Preparation and Occupations displays the links among the instructional program codes and descriptions used by the U.S. Office of Education to the following occupational classification systems: the third and fourth editions of the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT), the 1970 Census Classification, the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey Classification, the occupation codes from the survey-based and census-based industry occupation matrices developed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Standard Occupational Classification produced by the Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards, U.S. Department of Commerce. In addition, data are included for General Education Development, Specific Vocational Preparation, physical demands, working conditions, and industry designations derived from job analysis information used in preparing the DOT.

While this publication and the accompanying computer tape represented NOICC's first effort to provide an up-to-date and easily accessible crosswalk for the different classification systems, they were interim editions because three of the classification systems included in the crosswalk have since undergone major revisions. Given the importance of the classification systems to the OIS, NOICC provided extensive technical assistance throughout the revision process. NOICC activities of this nature included:

- Participation in an interagency committee on occupational classification responsible for reviewing proposed changes in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC).

- Staff resources to the Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards, Department of Commerce, for revisions in the SOC and in DOT assignments in the SOC.

- A transfer of funds to the Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards to support preparation of an updated computer tape required for publicatio of the 1980 edition of the SOC manual.

- A joint effort with the Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to prepare new descriptions for vocational education instructional programs. NOICC participation included extensive technical assistance in writing, reviewing and comparing new program descriptions and in developing a coding structure based on the new descriptions. A field review draft of the new classification system was distributed for comment, and the final system will be published by NCES in 1981.

- A project conducted in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics for a careful review of the relationships between the codes for the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Survey, the DOT, 1970 Census, and SOC codes.

- Technical assistance to the Bureau of the Census through the Office of Statistical Policy and Standards in the preparation of the 1980 Census classification system for occupations.

To accomodate the revisions in the major classification system, NOICC has awarded a grant to the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools, Vocational Education Special Projects Unit, Ventura, California, to prepare revised editions of Vocational Preparation and Occupations. The project is being conducted in two stages. Products of the first stage will be a 1980 edition of a full crosswalk tape and a three-volume publication of Vocational Preparation and Occupations. The 1980 edition will contain revisions in the classification systems noted above except that the 1970 Census system and the current vocational education program categories will be retained.

The second stage will provide a 1981 edition of the crosswalk tape and the publication. The 1981 edition will incorporate the 1980 Census system and the new vocational education program categories, as well as any revisions made in other classification systems after the 1980 edition is released.

NOICC sponsored several projects directed toward improvements in the OES program-- a component of NOICC's OIS. The Education Amendments of 1976 specify that the OIS is to include information on occupational supply and occupational demand. NOICC has adopted the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program of the Department of Labor as the standard principal source of current and projected occupational employment data at the local, State, and national level. The computer programming and processing necessary to prepare State and area occupational demand projections are currently performed for nearly all the States by the national office of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. NOICC has transferred funds to the Bureau of Labor Statistics to determine the feasibility of the States' performing this data processing and, if found feasible, to develop the necessary computer software. Successful completion of this project will enable the States to process their own current and projected occupational demand data beginning if FY 1982.

In a related effort, NOICC has transfered funds to the Office of Research and Development, Employment and Training Administration, for research to improve the methods used for projecting industry employment requirements, a critical element in the development of occupational projections through the OES program. This research is to be carried out by Columbia University and involves examining various types of industries and local economies, developing methods for classifying actual areas and industries into these categories and testing various projection methods to evaluate which techniques are most appropriate to particular types of industries and economies. The results of this project will be disseminated to the State employment security agencies and should prove useful in improving future projection efforts.

NOICC is also sponsoring a project to examine alternative procedures to meet the need for information on occupational employment in agricultural industries and in the non-wage and salary sectors of the economy. The OES survey does not provide employment data for these sectors. Thus, the NOICC project will:

- Identify user needs for information on both these sectors,
- Review current efforts to develop employment estimates for these sectors,
- Examine the extent to which existing efforts meet user needs and the availability of information required to conduct occupational employment surveys to provide data not presently available,
- With the assistance of a Technical Advisory Group, make recommendations on the content of any proposed survey or other activities designed to develop employment data for the agricultural and non-wage or salary sectors.

In a project just underway, NOICC and the National Center for Education Statistics have funded the National Center for Research in Vocational Education to explore issues in estimating occupational supply from vocational and employment related training programs. The data systems to be examined include CETA reporting systems, the Vocational Education Data System, the Higher Education General Information Survey, the Vocational Rehabilitation Management Information System, the NCES Non-collegiate Postsecondary School Survey, and the Job Corps reporting system. These systems will be examined for overlap and resulting double-counting of trainees, and for gaps in reporting. The study will be carried out through interviews with key Federal, State and local personnel responsible for data development and reporting. State and local interviewees will be from about ten selected States representing a cross-section of State data systems and organizational structures.

OIS Development and Implementation: SOICC Activities

In FY 1979, nine SOICCs either did not request or did not expend funds for program activities, in most cases because the SOICC was not operational until late in the year. Consequently, the 1979 activities reviewed in this report are activities conducted by 48 of the 57 SOICCs. The activities planned for fiscal year 1980 and reviewed in this report include information from all SOICCs.

OIS development and implementation activities are of the highest priority to both NOICC and the SOICCs. The large number of SOICC projects initiated in this area reflect a strong commitment to accomplishing the highly technical task of combining relevant data available from various agencies into one comprehensive operating system.

The following list represents a cross-section of the OIS development and implementation activities initiated by the SOICCs with NOICC Basic Assistance Grant funds:

- In 1979, eighteen SOICCs conducted surveys, workshops or conferences designed to identify user needs for various kinds of occupational information and to obtain from information users the priority of those needs. At least 21 SOICCs conducted user needs assessments in 1980. These activities emphasize the SOICCs concern for developing a user-oriented OIS.

- To identify the occupational information currently available, six SOICCs inventoried the occupational data sources within their States during 1979. Nineteen SOICCs planned similar inventories in 1980. These projects assist the SOICCs in avoiding duplication and enable them to assist users in locating available data.

- OIS feasiblity studies were planned by fifteen SOICCs for FY 1980. These studies provide an assessment of the status of occupational information and information reporting systems in the different States. Results of the studies are used to examine alternative methods for implementing the OIS and for selecting the method most appropriate to the operational environment within a particular State.

- In FY 1980, eight SOICCs planned move beyond a feasiblity study to begin analyzing specific OIS requirements. The analyses were to include identifying OIS products, timing, costs and processing requirements.

- A general design for the OIS was being developed in 27 States during FY 1979. In FY 1980, the number of SOICCs engaged in general design activities ran to 49.

Two SOICCs were also awarded Special Purpose grants by NOICC in FY 1979 for projects related to OIS design and implementation. The North Carolina SOICC, with guidance from a technical advisory group, has prepared a preliminary OIS design. Based on a detailed review of user needs assessments and systems currently operating in the State, the design identifies the specific information elements to be contained within the OIS, the sources for these data, and the products to be provided by the OIS. Data are now being assembled and computer programs written to implement the OIS. Also nearing completion is the design of an OIS supply/demand model.

With Special Purpose Project funds, the Oregon SOICC is developing an OIS based on a network of interrelated programs and systems. The Oregon project has established a Technical Steering Committee, prepared a concept paper on the OIS network, analyzed a Statewide user needs assessment and developed a detailed policy statement concerning the integration of occupational supply/demand data into the OIS. A detailed analysis of current data availability and delivery is in process. A long-range plan for implementing and operating the OIS as a network will be developed using the results of all previous project activities.

In implementing an OIS, the SOICCs face a dual requirement: at the same time that the OIS is being developed, the system must also be operational--providing reliable and relevant information to a variety of user groups at periodic intervals. Thus, at the same time that they are addressing issues of general system design and development, many SOICCs are also beginning OIS operations. The variety of operational modes employed by the SOICCs justifies NOICC's decision to give the States wide latitude in their approach to implementing the OIS. The Special Purpose Projects described above present two approaches; at least three other approaches are being employed by SOICCs, as follows:

- Several SOICCs are serving as clearinghouses for occupational information within their States.

- The Alabama SOICC houses a computerized, publication producing system.

- The Nevada SOICC uses the State Library System as a vehicle to disseminate information.

Projects to improve specific OIS data elements are a second major focus of SOICC efforts, with improvements in occupational demand and occupational supply data being given particular attention. Examples of SOICC activities conducted in this area with NOICC Basic Assistance grant funds include:

- Special tabulations of demand data for sub-State areas, for specific occupations, and tabulations of selected demographic characteristics.

- Financial support to initiate the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey in several States. This survey is part of the Federal/State cooperative OES program that has been adopted by NOICC as the standard principal source of current and projected demand data.

- The Texas Employment Commission, with support of the Texas SOICC and in cooperation with the Region VI of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, has conducted a test to determine if proposed methods for using OES data collected through a Statewide sample can be used to generate occupational employment estimates for sub-State areas. A similar project is being conducted by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Industry with the support of the New Jersey SOICC, and an earlier project by the Colorado SOICC is described below.

- Projects to improve the availability of occupational supply data by obtaining data from sources not previously reporting to a central location, such as coordinating the development of data on training in private post-secondary (proprietary) schools.

- Assistance with follow-up studies on persons who have completed or left vocational or job training programs. Information from these studies is integral to the development of occupational supply estimates.

Several SOICCs also were awarded Special Purpose Grants to conduct projects for improvement of demand or supply data. The following is a summary of these Special Purpose Projects:

- A study by the Oklahoma SOICC to assess the feasibility of compiling student follow-up data from employment security records rather than follow-up surveys. Data compiled from individual worker records is aggregated by education programs and compared against data compiled from a follow-up survey to determine accuracy and reliability.

- The Colorado SOICC conducted a project to test alternative methods to estimate demand at a sub-State level using Statewide OES survey data.

- The Oklahoma SOICC developed a procedure for using Census-based data to estimate occupational demand in the agriculture industry and for domestic, self-employed, and unpaid family workers. These sectors are not surveyed in the OES program. A prototype list of occupations for use in surveying occupational employment in agricultural services was also developed.

- The Michigan SOICC is comparing job applicant and job opening data from the employment security agency with follow-up data on vocational education students to determine short-term employment demand.

- The South Carolina SOICC is investigating several methods of collecting vocational education enrollment, completion and placement data. Surveys of teachers are being compared with surveys of students to determine the cost benefit of the two methods. Occupational expectations of students and their teachers prior to student completion of a vocational program are being compared with actual occupational placement following program completion. The project will also develop procedures for incorporating the survey data into a supply/demand analysis.

- The Massachusetts SOICC compiled standardized data on CETA participants. The data have been used to identify the extent to which participants are counted in supply totals by more than one source of supply. Further analysis of the data estimated the incremental supply of labor originating from CETA skill training programs.

Because several SOICCs are conducting projects to estimate occupational demand for sub-State areas, NOICC has served in a coordinative role to assure consistency in the approach from State to State and to prevent duplication of effort.

A third major area of SOICC emphasis is supply/demand analysis. Activities conducted in this area include the development of procedures to interface supply and demand data and of matrices for supply/demand analysis. In FY 1979, eight SOICCs sponsored projects of this nature through their Basic Assistance grants and eleven SOICCs did so in FY 1980.

Other SOICC projects were directed toward improving occupational characteristics data. These activities include improvements to demographic, labor force, socioeconomic and other occupationally related data. For example, the Illinois SOICC provided financial assistance to the Illinois Bureau of Employment Security to develop a capability to conduct regional wage surveys within the State. In FY 1979, nine SOICCs used NOICC Basic Assistance grant funds to support improvements in occupational characteristics data. Ten SOICCs conducted projects in this area during FY 1980.

The Florida SOICC was awarded a Special Purpose grant for a project to improve characteristics data. This project has developed and field tested a method to measure specific physical capacities required to perform essential job tasks in different occupations. The data collected will be included in job descriptions used by individuals making career choices and will be of particular importance to handicapped persons who are choosing careers.

Improving Interagency Communication and Coordination: NOICC Activities

During FY 1979, the NOICC expended $182,000 (excluding SOICC Basic Assistance grants) to improve communication and coordination among agencies. FY 1980 obligations for this area of NOICC activity were $449,000 (again, exclusive of SOICC Basic Assistance grants).

NOICC provides a formal mechanism for increasing communication and coordination among its four signatory agencies at the Federal level. In addition, the NOICC's communication/coordination efforts have been extended to include several Federal agencies, other than NOICC's statutory members, having responsibility for collecting, analyzing or using occupationally related information. Similarly, NOICC has initiated communication with many professional associations and quasi-governmental organizations that have an interest in the OIS and other NOICC activities.

A major NOICC accomplishment in the area of coordination grew out of a series of interagency meetings initiated by the Veterans Administration. The meetings brought together representatives of nine Federal agencies involved in obtaining data on the job placements of persons completing vocational training programs. Through these meetings, the National Center for Education Statistics and the Veterans Administration have accepted a uniform set of data items that satisfy the reporting requirements of both agencies. The Federal Trade Commission participated in this work and, if they undertake follow-up activity, have ageed to accept this uniform set of data items. The success of this NOICC initiative furthers the NOICC policy of eliminating duplication. It should lead to the use of standard definitions in reporting information and reduce the reporting burden.

NOICC also participates in the Interdepartmental Committee on Employment Opportunities and Training Needs in Agribusiness, the members of which include representatives of the Department of Agriculture; the Bureau of the Census; the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Department of Education; and the Employment and Training Administration and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor. The Committee's purpose is to provide a system for securing national, State and local information on current and projected training needs in occupations requiring or using agribusiness competencies. With methods developed by the Committee, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has tabulated national projections of employment in agribusiness occupations. A set of procedures for developing similar projections at the State and local levels was also prepared by the Committee. NOICC distributed these materials to the SOICCs with the request that the SOICCs coordinate and assist in developing State and local projections for employment demand in agribusiness-related occupations.

To supplement the work of this Committee, NOICC has initiated a project (described earlier in this report) to examine alternative procedures for meeting the need for information on occupational employment in agriculture. This project was coordinated with the activities of the Agribusiness Committee.

NOICC has expanded its communication/coordination activities by initiating meetings with the Department of Defense. Topics of discussion include ways for NOICC to assist the military by increasing awareness of the military as a major employer and as a source training, aiding recruitment efforts by providing information on civilian programs that offer training related to military occupation specialties and providing labor market and career information for use in post-service counseling. Several areas in which the Department of Defense can assist NOICC have also been identified. These include providing demand information on military occupation specialties and providing data on military separatees as a source of occupational supply.

In support of the Employment and Training Administration, NOICC staff were part of a work group to develop information specifically designed to provide Private Industry Councils, created under Title VII of CETA, with guidelines for the use of available labor market information to identify job opportunities and for obtaining such information through employer contacts when it is not collected by existing data systems. These guidelines are to be issued by the Employment and Training Administration as "Jobs in the Private Sector: Use of Labor Market Information," Labor Market Information Monograph No. 2.

The CETA Amendments of 1978 require prime sponsors to report occupational training and placement of their clients using a detailed occupational code. NOICC has provided assistance to the Employment and Training Administration in the implementation of the reporting requirements and in the development of training materials, particularly in reporting by the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System. NOICC has funded two Special Purpose Grants for projects related to this activity. The first project provided training materials in the use of the SOC in reporting training program completions. The second, described in the previous section of this report, measured the occupational supply originating from CETA programs. An objective of the latter project was to use the SOC to code information on CETA program participants.

Other activities conducted by NOICC to fulfill the legislative mandate of increasing interagency communication and coordination include:

- Meetings with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Employment and Training Administration to prepare a position paper on the geographic level to be used in developing occupational demand projections;
- A meeting with the National Institute of Education on occupational mobility projects of mutual interest;
- Cooperation with the Office of Vocational and Adult Education in preparing review procedures for assessing State planning efforts in vocational education; and
- Meetings with representatives of the Rehabilitation Services Administration concerning the occupational data collected through their reporting system.

The above activities represent NOICC's communication and coordination efforts in specific areas of OIS concern. To assure a coordinated approach to developing and implementing the OIS as a whole, NOICC has established a Federal Resource Group. This group serves on a continuing basis and includes representatives of the four signatory agencies, as well as other Federal agencies. They provide information on the programs they represent and serve as a technical review panel for materials produced by the NOICC, such as a Framework document, the OIS long-range plan, and the OIS Handbook.

NOICC's communication and coordination activities also involve the publication and distribution of a variety of documents, including a newsletter that ultimately will be produced on a monthly basis.

The Career Education Incentive Act of 1977 directs the Commissioner of Education to consult with NOICC and to furnish information on "Federal programs which gather, analyze, and disseminate occupational and career information." With funds provided by the National Center for Education Statistics, information on such programs was collected and, in FY 1979, NOICC funded the publication of this information in a document titled, NOICC Related Activities: A Review of Federal Programs. Distributed at both State and Federal levels by both the Office of Career Information and NOICC, the publication contains information on the specific programs of Federal agencies and organizations having responsibilities in the areas of education, training, and human resources, including relevant occupational information and data collection programs. During 1980, NOICC cooperated with the Office of Career Education to assure widespread distribution of a second publication, A Counselors Guide to Occupational Information, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

A second NOICC publication distributed in FY 1979 was A Study of State Occupational Information Development and Utilization Efforts. This report contains the results of a NOICC-sponsored study to identify State efforts through July 1978 in occupational information development and use. Conducted through personal interviews in each State, the study paid particular attention to unique or innovative information activities. Thus, the report provides both a comprehensive overview of activities across the country and a way of identifying special methods, approaches, studies or projects for developing and using occupational information.

In FY 1980, NOICC published and distributed a third document, Feasibility Study for a Project on Improvement of Occuptional Information. With financial assistance from NOICC, this study was conducted by the Commission on Human Resources of the National Academy of Sciences to determine the feasibility of improving the reporting, classification and coding of occupational data obtained through the Census of Population and other major data collection programs.

Conference activities provide another method used by the NOICC to improve communication. In January 1980, NOICC and the Rehabilitation Services Administration jointly sponsored the National Planning Conference on Occupational Information for Handicapped Individuals. The conference provided an opportunity to exchange information on State and National efforts to develop and deliver occupational information tailored to the needs of handicapped individuals, to improve cooperation among agencies involved in providing services to the handicapped and to prepare recommendations for future activities in this area of concern.

NOICC has initiated communication with such professional, quasi-governmental organizations and other Federal organizations as the National Advisory Council for Vocational Education (NACVE), the American Vocational Association (AVA) and the Federal Education Data Acquisition Council (FEDAC). Representatives of both NACVE and AVA participated in the 1980 Annual Conference of SOICC Directors and a representative of NOICC was involved in the National Conference of State Directors of Vocational Education in April 1980, the NACVE National Conference in June 1980 and the Conference of Employment Security Research Directors in August 1980. NOICC's involvement with FEDAC has concerned technical issues related to the reporting of educational information.

NOICC also joined with the National Center for Educational Brokering, the Education Commission of the States, and, among others, the College Board, to sponsor a national conference in April 1980 on Statewide Educational and Occupational Information and Counseling. The Conference brought together Federal, State and local personnel involved in the use of occupational information for counseling purposes. Particular emphasis was given to State level cooperation between the SOICCs and the Educational Information Centers established pursuant to the Higher Education Act to provide comprehensive information on educational programs and services.

Presentations on NOICC and the OIS have been given at the National Conference of the American Vocational Association, at regional meetings of educational personnel sponsored by the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO), at a manpower seminar of the Bureau of the Labor Statistics, a meeting of the Technical Task Force on the Vocational Education Data System, and at other conferences or meetings of a similar nature.

Each year, NOICC sponsors a series of symposia for representatives of Federal agencies. The topics covered in the symposia vary, but the consistent purpose of the series is to increase awareness of occupational information activities. Topics covered in the 1980 symposia series were collection and use of client follow-up data, NOICC/SOICC efforts to improve occupational supply and demand information, and utilization of career information with special target groups.

Another major aspect of NOICC's communication and coordination responsibilities is communication within the NOICC/SOICC network. Activities directed toward fulfilling this responsibility include the following:

- A series of information memoranda and a series of administrative memoranda to enhance communication with the SOICCs. Information memoranda cover topics such as NOICC activities at the Federal level, NOICC position papers, SOICC-related activities of the signatory agencies, and publications of interest to the SOICCs. The administrative memoranda are used to provide guidelines on the SOICC Basic Assistance grants, to announce competitive grant programs, to specify fiscal procedures, and to give similar kinds of guidance to the SOICCs.

- Creation of a SOICC Directors Resource Group that is called upon to assist NOICC to accomplish major projects or functions. It has, for example, assisted in the preparation of chapters included in the publication Framework for Developing an Occupational Information System, provided technical assistance in the preparation of NOICC's plans for OIS development, and helped plan and carry out the annual conferences of SOICC Directors and reviewed drafts of the OIS Handbook.

- An annual conference of SOICC Directors, which provides a forum to explain administrative procedures, policy changes, program developments, technical developments, and to communicate NOICC and SOICC activities and problems. NOICC seeks the involvement of representatives of other Federal and State NOICC/SOICC network members at the annual conference.

- State visits to provide technical assistance on SOICC operations and to participate in SOICC sponsored workshops and conferences, primarily to explain NOICC's objectives, policies, and activities.

- Liaison activities to coordinate SOICC projects with appropriate Federal agencies and vice versa.

Improving Interagency Communication and Coordination: SOICC Activities

Like NOICC at the Federal level, the SOICCs provide a formal mechanism for increasing communication and coordination among their member agencies at the State level. The SOICCs, too, have extended their activities to include other agencies and organizations interested in or affected by development of the OIS.

The SOICCs use several methods to increase communication and coordination within their States. Supported with Basic Assistance grant funds, these methods include:

- Conferences to assure that users are aware of the applications and existing sources of occupational information. In FY 1979, 29 SOICCs sponsored awareness-generating conferences; at least 40 planned to hold such meetings in FY 1980.

- Brochures on SOICC services and SOICC newsletters that explain SOICC activities, discuss sources of occupational information, publicize the availability of occupational data, and address related issues of particular importance to their States.

- Training seminars, workshops and materials for users of occupational information.

- Publication and distribution of occupational and career information, such as guides to occupational and related education information in the States and, in a few cases, publications that provide information about specific occupations.

- Special projects such as television spots and information booths at conferences and other gatherings, including State fairs.

- In Hawaii, the SOICC and the State education agency have formed an ad hoc committee to encourage State legislative support for employment, occupational and education planning.

Other forms of cooperation fostered by the SOICCs include:

- The Texas SOICC reviews research proposals submitted to two of its member agencies. The review keeps the SOICC fully informed on research being conducted in areas of its concern and enables the SOICC to minimize duplication in research efforts.

The Texas SOICC also provides one clear example of what can be accomplished ed through cooperation and coordination. Some years ago, the Texas Legislature created a Joint Committee for Vocational Education to promote cooperation and coordination among three agencies in the area of vocational education. Recently, the members of the Joint Committee voted to request legislative action abolishing the Joint Committee. In significant part, this request is based on creation of the SOICC, which provides a mechanism to expand cooperation among vocational education agencies to include other agencies with related missions.

Communication and coordination within the NOICC/SOICC network was furthered through a user needs assessment workshop held in February 1979. With financial assistance from NOICC, the Iowa and Wisconsin SOICCs jointly sponsored this workshop to exchange information on the needs assessments underway in several States. Attended by representatives from fifteen SOICCs, the workshop enabled those planning needs assessments to benefit from the experience of those having such projects in process or completed.

The Massachusetts SOICC was awarded a Special Purpose grant to develop training materials on the concepts, structure, content and possible applications of the SOC. The materials include a training manual, overhead transparencies and a trainee's manual. Designed to satisfy the need for comprehensive training on the SOC, these materials will also serve as the basis for more specific training materials adapted to the individual needs of different agencies. The materials will enable SOICC Directors to provide SOC training in their States.

Attention to the Labor Market Information Needs of Youth: NOICC Activities

In FY 1979, NOICC expended $657,000 on activities for meeting the labor market information needs of youth (exclusive of SOICC Basic Assistance grants). In FY 1980, NOICC support for this area of effort increased to about $3.0 million (again excluding SOICC Basic Assistance grants), of which $1.9 million was used for competitive Career Information Delivery System grants.

In June 1979, NOICC announced to the SOICCs a competitive grant program to encourage and aid in development and implementation of Statewide Career Information Delivery Systems (CIDS). NOICC stipulated that CIDS grants would not exceed $150,000 each year for two years and that the grantees were required to match NOICC funds by at least 100% from funding sources within the States. Acceptable match included auditable in-kind expenditures and/or actual dollars.

Throughout the development of CIDS program guidlines and the negotiation of interprogram coordination activities, NOICC was assisted by a Task Force comprised of representatives from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, the Employment and Training Administration, the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Institute of Education, and the Office of Education. Through the work of this Task Force, letters of support for the CIDS program were sent to the States by agency program officials identifying sources of funds available at the State level that could be used to provide required matching support for CIDS grants.

The goal of the CIDS program is to have a positive influence on the process by which people choose jobs and careers. To do so, the Career Information Delivery Systems being implemented through NOICC grants provide occupational, educational, and training information to persons who are in the process of career exploration and decisionmaking. Required characteristics of the CIDS include:

- Each system is to be Statewide or be designed to become Statewide. Each system is to incorporate State and sub-State specific information, as well as national information.

- Interagency and intergroup cooperation are to be fostered in all aspects of the CIDS

- Each system is to emphasize the delivery of occupational and educational information to the widest possible range of user groups in the labor force and those preparing to enter the labor force, including youth, disadvantaged workers, handicapped persons, mid-career changers, and those considering education and training beyond the secondary school level.

The CIDS program of NOICC builds upon work initiated in 1974 by the U.S. Department of Labor. The NOICC has adopted the Department of Labor program as the "standard concept in encouraging the development and use of occupational information for career choice and job search purposes." The Department of Labor, based on the results of a pilot project in one State, provided funds to develop career information systems in an additional eight States. The nine States that received funding for this purpose were not eligible to apply for CIDS grants from NOICC.

Twenty-two States submitted proposals to NOICC in response to the competitive CIDS grant announcement. In November 1979, NOICC awarded CIDS grants to fifteen SOICCs for a two-year period. These States were: Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, and South Carolina. During the first year of the grant period, the awards represented a total of $1.9 million in NOICC funds matched by a total of $4.10 million from sources within the States. State programs providing matching funds include CETA, Career Education, Educational Information Centers, Employment Security Agencies, Vocational Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation. Thus, the CIDS program is a truly cooperative effort with strong support from a range of programs and agencies. In September 1980, NOICC announced a second CIDS competitive grant, which is expected to fund similar efforts in three to five additional States. Proposals are to be received in November 1980.

To assist the SOICCs in applying for CIDS grants and to provide information to other interested parties, NOICC prepared and, after formal adoption by the Technical Steering Group, distributed a comprehensive position paper on the organization and development of CIDS. This document is taken largely from a booklet entitled, Career Information Systems: Standards for Organization and Development, published by Employment and Training Administration in November 1977. NOICC's position paper updates and broadens the original booklet to reflect NOICC's legislative mandates and the expanded interagency interest and cooperation in the area of career information delivery. The NOICC position paper on CIDS will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

To aid in making the CIDS program an operational reality, NOICC contracted with the National Governors' Association (NGA) to provide a two-year program of technical assistance. Specific kinds of technical assistance provided include:

- conducting activities designed to maintain Nationwide and Federal-level interagency understanding and support of the program,
- assisting NOICC to resolve specific programmatic development problems, and
- planning and managing technical assistance and training activities for the SOICCs planning CIDS applications or receiving CIDS grants.

SOICC assistance and training activities conducted by NGA included a workshop in August 1979 for States intending to apply for CIDS grants. The workshop was attended by representatives of thirty-four States. The workshop agenda included reports on the information gathered through on-site reviews of CIDS programs in five States. In addition, the CIDS grant application guidelines were reviewed and the vendors of different career information systems discussed the structure and operation of their systems.

In January 1980, NGA conducted a second workshop, this one to assist SOICCs awarded CIDS grants with development of a management plan for CIDS implementation. Staff from career information systems in operation discussed problems associated with initiating a CIDS in a State. Work sessions were then conducted with each SOICC to develop a plan for managing their CIDS implementation activities during the first year of the grant period.

Prior to initiating the CIDS program on the scale represented by the grant awards, NOICC demonstrated its interest in this area by supporting a proposal from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). NOICC was one of the organizations transferring funds to FIPSE for a project to provide assistance to States interested in planning and implementing Statewide CIDS. Through this project, training and encouragement was provided to seven States and the District of Columbia considering CIDS implementation. Of these, five States later won CIDS grants and a sixth is continuing CIDS implementation using State funding. The project has also produced training materials for use by other States. The materials include a brochure explaining computer-based systems of career information, a paper providing a practical introduction, a guide to the financing of a State-based system of career information and proceedings of a conference on marketing and user services techniques for CIDS.

Another NOICC project to give special attention to the labor market information needs of youth transferred funds to the National Institute of Education for a two-phase study of career information sources and systems for secondary schools. The study's first phase will determine, through a national survey of career information sources in secondary schools, what career information is now being delivered to secondary school students, how the information is being delivered, and the quality of the information. The second phase of the project will be conducted through on-site visits to secondary schools to interview persons working with different systems for the delivery of career information. Results of the interviews will be analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative information delivery systems in improving career awareness.

NOICC has also supported a research project to develop intensive job search and labor market information for minority youth. Assisted through a transfer of NOICC funds to the Office of Research and Development, Employment and Training Administration, this project has completed a planning/developmental phase in which a specific curriculum was developed for inner-city Black youth. The curriculum encompasses occupational and labor market information, vocational interests, current skills and job-seeking skills. Testing procedures, measurements of outcomes and a plan for analyzing the project's results were also completed. The project is currently implementing the curriculum in two Philadelphia schools.

Attention to the Labor Market Information Needs of Youth: SOICC Activities

In FY 1979, six out of every 10 SOICCs were involved in activities that focused on meeting the labor market information needs of youth. The principle mechanism for funding SOICC activities were through NOICC grants: Basic Assistance, Special Purpose, and Career Information Delivery System grants.

The Basic Assistance grant funded SOICC activities included feasibility studies relating to CIDS and projects to enhance and improve existing career information delivery efforts. Three projects of particular interest were:

"Unemployed Youth and Career Project": The Ohio SOICC funded the Ohio Career Information System (OCIS) to expand the number of schools and youth training agencies using the OCIS. The subsidy was intended as an incentive to encourage potential users to join the OCIS. As a result, twenty-two new subscribers have joined.

"OES Survey Demand/Descriptive Data Available to Youth": The Alabama SOICC funded an effort to expand the present automated career information system to incorporate recently available sub-State OES survey demand information.

"SOC Profiles": The North Carolina SOICC developed profiles for SOC clusters using workers trait groups for use in the North Carolina CIDS.

Special Purpose grants were used to fund two projects focusing on the labor market information needs of youth.

"A Career Education Training Module for Institutional Youths' Parent Surrogates": The District of Columbia SOICC developed and used a career education training package for staff who serve as parent surrogates for institutionalized youth. In addition to training materials and a training session format, the project produced a guide to literature on career education. The guide is used by the "parent surrogates" to supplement the District of Columbia career education materials that are used to help the institutionalized youth.

"Interstate Occupational Information System Access Model - Design and Test": The Wisconsin SOICC has been given a Special Purpose grant to create a model system whereby computerized career information system users in one State can directly access and interact with another State's career information system. This project will be completed in conjunction with NOICC's overall effort to incorporate the Standard Occupational Classification into career information systems. After SOC codes are incorporated into the CIDS, the model system will be implemented on a demonstration basis between two States. Following the demonstration stage, the project will establish the feasibility of implementing the system among at least the nine States with systems funded in the earlier Department of Labor program. Thirdly, there will be a national seminar demonstrating the system and training personnel from the nine States as well as other States. Finally, a set of implementation guidelines will be produced to facilitate other States' implementation.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Occupational Information System (OIS)

NOICC has established a long-range plan for OIS that sets forth specific activities through FY 1983, indicating priorities, target completion dates and resource requirements. The long-range plan covers five areas of NOICC's responsibilities related to OIS.

1. CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT - NOICC assumes leadership in developing the concept of an occupational information system in its full scope and detail. The conceptual development is designed to be the foundation upon which NOICC and SOICC OIS development and implementation activities are built.

2. OIS STANDARDS, POLICIES AND REVIEW - NOICC has the role of developing and administering policies and standards for the State and national occupational information system. The standards will prescribe minimum levels of (1) OIS content, (2) OIS delivery mechanisms, (3) quality of information included in OIS, and (4) operational modes. The standards will serve as guidelines for the SOICCs in developing and implementing OIS, and for NOICC in monitoring OIS activities, and will be consistent with standards of agency programs related to OIS.

   NOICC plans major efforts in two areas in carrying out this responsibility: (1) to develop policy or guidance documents on three identified issues (labor market areas, area skill surveys and confidentiality of data) and additional documents, as needed; and (2) to review SOICC OIS activities. The documents will be issued by the appropriate NOICC member agency and distributed to SOICC staff.

3. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION - NOICC, through its staff, has the role of providing interagency coordination at the Federal level for the purposes of (1) fostering the adoption of OIS standards in agency programs, including training in the use of occupational information; (2) strengthening existing programs providing information and data elements needed in OIS, including addressing funding issues; (3) resolving occupational and training program classification issues; (4) obtaining agency input and participation in NOICC OIS standards and policy development and technical development activities; and (5) developing new programs to produce information needed for OIS.

4. TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT - NOICC has the role of guiding and fostering technical projects for the development and improvement of information, data and procedures for OIS. NOICC carries out this role through (1) funding of technical development activities in the SOICCs through the basic assistance grants or other grants, (2) funding technical development activities in the Federal agencies by special grants and contracts, (3) providing input to the agencies in technical development projects carried out under their own auspices.

NOICC proposes specific technical development projects in the following areas of occupational information:

A. Occupational Demand Information - activities for improvement or expansion of existing demand data and improving its availability to State and national agencies through the following kinds of projects:

- Expansion of OES survey and survey-based matrix to include agriculture, self-employed and unpaid family workers
- Research on occupation separation rates
- Sub-State information on occupational demand
- State and area projections computer system
- Short-term occupation needs indicators
- OES Classification Manual

B. Occupational Supply Information - activities for improvement or expansion of existing supply measurement issues and developing prototype instruments for State and local studies. Specific studies include the following:

- Vocational education follow-up data collection testing
- Proxy follow-up information
- Training materials on occupational coding
- National vocational education follow-up data
- Measuring supply from CETA
- Follow-up information for higher education
- Training in industry survey prototype
- Migration research
- Occupational mobility research

C. Occupational Characteristics Information - activities for providing 1980 Census data on occupational characteristics, developing prototype instruments for collecting earnings data at the State and local levels and research on career ladders and emerging occupations.

D. Complementary Information - No specific activities identified. Some activities are expected to be identified as the OIS Handbook is developed and as the career information delivery system program evolves.

E. Supply-Demand Analysis - a major and continuing effort in developing and updating crosswalks among occupational and instructional program classifications, packaging crosswalks for specific applications and a major research effort in supply-demand analysis procedures.

V. OIS ASSISTANCE TO SOICCs: NOICC has the role of providing technical assistance to the SOICCs in OIS design, development and implementation. The role is carried out through (1) general guidance on OIS development and implementation, (2) direct technical assistance through providing technical material and one-to-one assistance, (3) providing a network for inter-SOICC communication on technical projects and issues, and (5) general technical assistance through coordination of agency programs and fostering OIS standards in agency programs.

The level of direct assistance to SOICCs is anticipated to increase as SOICC OIS efforts develop and as NOICC develops resources to provide such assistance. Financial support of OIS development in SOICCs is given through the annual basic assistance grants.

VI. NATIONAL OIS: NOICC is charged in its basic legislation to develop a national occupational information system. NOICC is conducting an assessment of occupational information needs among Federal agencies as part of the OIS Assistance Grant. Plans call for development of a national OIS design based on the results of this assessment.

Career Information Delivery Systems (CIDS)

NOICC will be adopting several strategies in the future to facilitate the development and promote the success of Statewide CIDS programs. One approach is that NOICC will work with State and Federal agencies to ensure standardization of the components of CIDS. For example, NOICC staff will work with the NOICC member agencies to facilitate the adoption of SOC as a primary classification structure in this OIS related data reporting systems. A second approach is that NOICC will continue to coordinate its efforts in the CIDS programs with efforts of other Federal and State agencies that administer programs addressing the labor market and career information needs of youth. Thirdly, NOICC will also work with SOICCs and professional groups in planning future enhancements and improvements in Statewide CIDS. NOICC will continue to encourage career information delivery efforts on a regional basis by consortia of States and adaptation of a CIDS to meet the needs of clients in both urban and rural settings.

Coordination/Communication/Training Plan

NOICC has developed a plan delineating activities relative to the areas of coordination, communication, and training. This plan is for FY 1980 and FY 1981.

There are several reasons to formalize the direction NOICC is to take in this area. With its initial organizational activities completed, NOICC has shifted to a program operational mode. This shift from organization to operations has also occurred for the SOICCs. The implementation of the OIS and growing number of States introducing CIDS also contribute to the need for the development of this plan.

1. Coordination and Communication

This section of the plan details the mechanisms NOICC will use to bring together the numerous State and Federal agencies working on the various aspects of occupational information. Activities such as the Technical Steering Group meetings, Technical Working Committees and other liaison/linkage meetings are to be included in this section.

The plan will also detail NOICC's internal and external communication mechanisms. The internal activities are focused towards communications among NOICC staff, and the SOICCs, and will include the development of a SOICC Director's Guidebook in addition to the current memorandum series. The mechanisms to be employed for this purpose will be designed to clarify and minimize the reporting burden of SOICCs to NOICC.

The external focus is on NOICC's communication with other Federal and State agencies, including those not listed in the legislation. This part of the plan addresses the improvement of existing mechanisms of communication, such as newsletters, reports and journal articles.

2. Training

Training is an extension of the communication process. It is conducted to insure that various individuals in the NOICC/SOICC Network become knowledgeable and/or proficient in a specific subject or process.

This portion of the plan describes the mechanisms to be used to accomplish NOICC's perceived training needs for the OIS Handbook, the VPO and SOC/CIDS project. Another portion of the plan delineates those activities perceived by the SOICC Directors as their needs for training. There also is a technical assistance component of the training plan. Technical support will be available to the NOICC/SOICC Network in such areas as conference planning and product publication.

APPENDIX A

NOICC ORGANIZATION AND OPERATING ARRANGEMENTS

In March 1977, the Federal agencies represented by the four statutory members of the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) entered into an Interagency Agreement to establish NOICC as an operating entity. This Agreement was revised in January 1978, to incorporate the additional legislative mandates assigned to NOICC by the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act of 1977. The revised Interagency Agreement was published in the Federal Register on February 7, 1978.

Citing NOICC's legislative mandates, the Interagency Agreement specifies the goals toward which NOICC is to direct its efforts, the responsibility of NOICC to assist each State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, the kinds of activities for which NOICC will use funds and the procedures to be used in estimating and requesting funds to support NOICC's activities. The Interagency Agreement also establishes NOICC's Technical Steering Group comprised of one person from the staff of each statutory NOICC member and, by invitation, a representative from the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Finally, the Interagency Agreement includes notice that Memoranda of Understanding among the four statutory members will be developed, as needed, to cover such areas as policy, staffing, administrative services and space for NOICC.

Two Memoranda of Understanding have been developed and signed by the statutory members to provide more specific guidance for NOICC's operations. The provisions of these memoranda are summarized below:

The Employment and Training Administration is responsible for providing:

- One-half the positions allocated to NOICC.
- Personnel services.
- Budget, accounting and similar fiscal agent services.
- Audits of NOICC's grants and contracts.

The Office of Education is responsible for providing:

- One-half the staff positions allocated to NOICC.
- Office space for NOICC staff.
- Communication services including, but not limited to, telephone services and routine reproduction.

The Technical Steering Group is delegated the authority and responsibility to:

- Determine the amount of funds necessary to carry out NOICC activities each fiscal year.
- Establish procedures for, review and approve an annual expenditure plan for the disbursements for all NOICC funds.
- Serve as a review board for sole source grants or contracts in excess of $10,000.
- Select, by majority vote, all NOICC professional staff positions GS-14 and below and submit recommendations to the statutory members on selection of the NOICC's Executive Director and principal coordinator(s).
- Review annually the NOICC organizational makeup and staffing complement and recommend necessary changes.
- Establish policy guidelines for the NOICC.
- Identify conflicting policy issues among participating agencies and forward such issues to the statutory members.

The Executive Director of NOICC is delegated the authority and responsibility to:

- Serve as the NOICC allottee.
- Serve as the NOICC Contracting and Granting Officer.
- Implement the approved annual expenditure plan.
- Approve all expenditures as the administrative officer of NOICC.
- Select all non-professional NOICC staff and submit recommendations to the TSG on selection of professional NOICC staff.

The unique organizational structure of the NOICC caused the process of securing permanent staff to be unusually slow. Consequently, the last staff position to be filled on a permanent basis was only filled in November 1979.

The NOICC staff is comprised of:

- Executive Director
- Coordinator for State and Interagency Networks
- Occupational Information Specialist
- Administrative Officer
- Coordinator of Occupational Informations Systems
- 2 Occupational Information Systems Specialists
- 4 Clerical Support Staff

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APPENDIX B

CREATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE SOICCS

One of the initial priorities of the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee was to secure the formal establishing of a State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (SOICC) in each State and to provide the assistance needed for the SOICCs to begin operations.

To establish each SOICC, NOICC required that two documents be prepared and signed: a NOICC/SOICC Agreement and an Interagency Agreement of the four statutory SOICC agencies. The NOICC/SOICC agreement established the legal relationship between the national and State Committees with respect to basic responsibilities and assurances. It also specified the agency to serve as the fiscal agent of the SOICC. The State Interagency Agreement delineated the purpose of the SOICC, its membership, its fiscal agent, and the general procedures for SOICC operations. In several States, the Interagency Agreement has been augmented by an Executive Order of the Governor or by State legislation.

After these documents were completed, each SOICC was required to submit for NOICC approval, a narrative annual plan and a program budget request. When these items were approved, the SOICC received Part A funds of its Basic Assistance Grant. Part A funds were intended to provide leadership staff for the SOICC; i.e., to provide for a SOICC Director and one support staff person.

After a SOICC Director was hired, the SOICC could request Part B funds of its Basic Assistance Grant. Part B funds were distributed on a formula basis for use by SOICCs at their discretion, within the mandates of the law. Principally, these funds were intended for occupational information system implementation and training activities.

In addition to their Basic Assistance grants, many SOICCs have acquired funds from non-NOICC sources. The most often reported source of additional SOICC funding is the Governor's Manpower Services Grant (both the Governor's five percent set aside and the four percent youth program set aside monies) under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. Other sources of SOICC funding include CETA Youth funds, Educational Information Center funds, special grants from Federal agencies, and Vocational Education funds. Nearly all SOICCs have received in-kind contributions from their member agencies, as well.

Membership of all SOICCs is comprised of representatives of at least the four statutory agencies. However, to further the cooperative relationships essential to their mission and to broaden the expertise available to SOICC operations, at least one fourth of the SOICCs have expanded the membership of their Committee. Non-statutory members of the SOICCs include representatives of such agencies and organizations as:

- Office of the Governor
- State Budget Office
- State Planning Office
- State Board of Higher Education and Postsecondary Education Commission
- State Advisory Council for Vocational Education
- Proprietary Schools
- Private Employers
- Organized Labor
- State Library

Clearly, the SOICCs have taken the initiative to build the State-level network necessary to develop a comprehensive occupational information system and, increasingly, they are being recognized as agencies that are making a measurable contribution in the field of occupational information.